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A LITTLE LEGISLATIVE CARE IS NEEDED WITH CIA

WWE can't quarrel with the right of Rep. Wright Patman's House subcommittee to look into the tax-exempt status of charitable foundations. On the other hand, the sequence of events the other day indicates that this investigating group is being less than cautious in this particular investigation. It was hardly necessary to bring the Central Intelligence agency into the inquiry, at least without a closed-door conversation with the CIA people. After all, in the business of counterintelligence there has to be some secrecy.

As we understand it, the Texas representative mentioned that the CIA was using the J. M. Kaplan Fund of New York as a channel for dispensing its secret funds. A few hours later, the subcommittee found itself closeted with CIA officials. Subsequently, it reported that the CIA aspects of the probe had come to an abrupt halt.

We mention this only because it would have seemed more prudent to have halted the public aspects of the CIA probe before they began. Obviously, the representatives were a bit embarrassed, once the doors were closed and they were filled in on this particular cloak-and-dagger operation.

We can't criticize a congressional committee for demanding, in executive session, details on such a relationship between a private fund and any government agency. It is something else to do this openly, as the subcommittee did. For all

you read and hear about the need for full freedom of public information in government, let's be frank about it: There is also a need, now and then, for secrecy. The subcommittee seems to have tripped over its own feet in just such a situation. We trust a lot of hard work has been